

REMARKS

Claims 1-13 have been examined, of which claims 1-6 and 13 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e). Also, the Examiner has indicated that claims 7-12 contain allowable subject matter.

Preliminary Matters

Applicant thanks the Examiner for including the Interview Summary of April 15, 2004, with the current Office Action. Due to the remarks provided in the May 5, 2004 Response, Applicant submits that no statement of substance of the Interview is necessary at this time.

Applicant respectfully requests the Examiner to indicate, in the next Office Action, whether the drawings filed on March 14, 2001, are acceptable.

Also, Applicant has amended claims 7-9 and 13 to correct minor grammatical errors. Such amendments do not narrow the literal scope of the claims and thus do not implicate an estoppel in the application of the doctrine of equivalents. Further, the amendments to claims 7-9 and 13 are not made for reasons of patentability.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e)

Claims 1-6 and 13 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,212,532 to Johnson et al. ("Johnson").

Since claims 1-6 have been canceled, without prejudice or disclaimer, Applicant submits that the rejection of such claims is now moot.

Further, since Applicant has amended claim 13 to include the allowable subject matter of claim 7, Applicant submits that claim 13 is patentable over the cited reference.

Allowable Subject Matter

Applicant thanks the Examiner for indicating that claims 7-12 contain allowable subject matter. Since claims 7-12 have been rewritten into independent form, Applicant submits that such claims are now in condition for allowance.

Newly Added Claims

Applicant has added claims 14-16 to provide more varied protection for the present invention. Applicant submits that claims 14 and 15 are patentable for at least analogous reasons as claim 7, and claim 16 is patentable for at least analogous reasons as claim 10.

Conclusion

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the

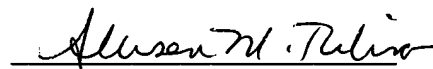
AMENDMENT UNDER 37 C.F.R. § 1.111
U.S. Application No.: 09/805,114

Attorney Docket No.: Q63084

Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,



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